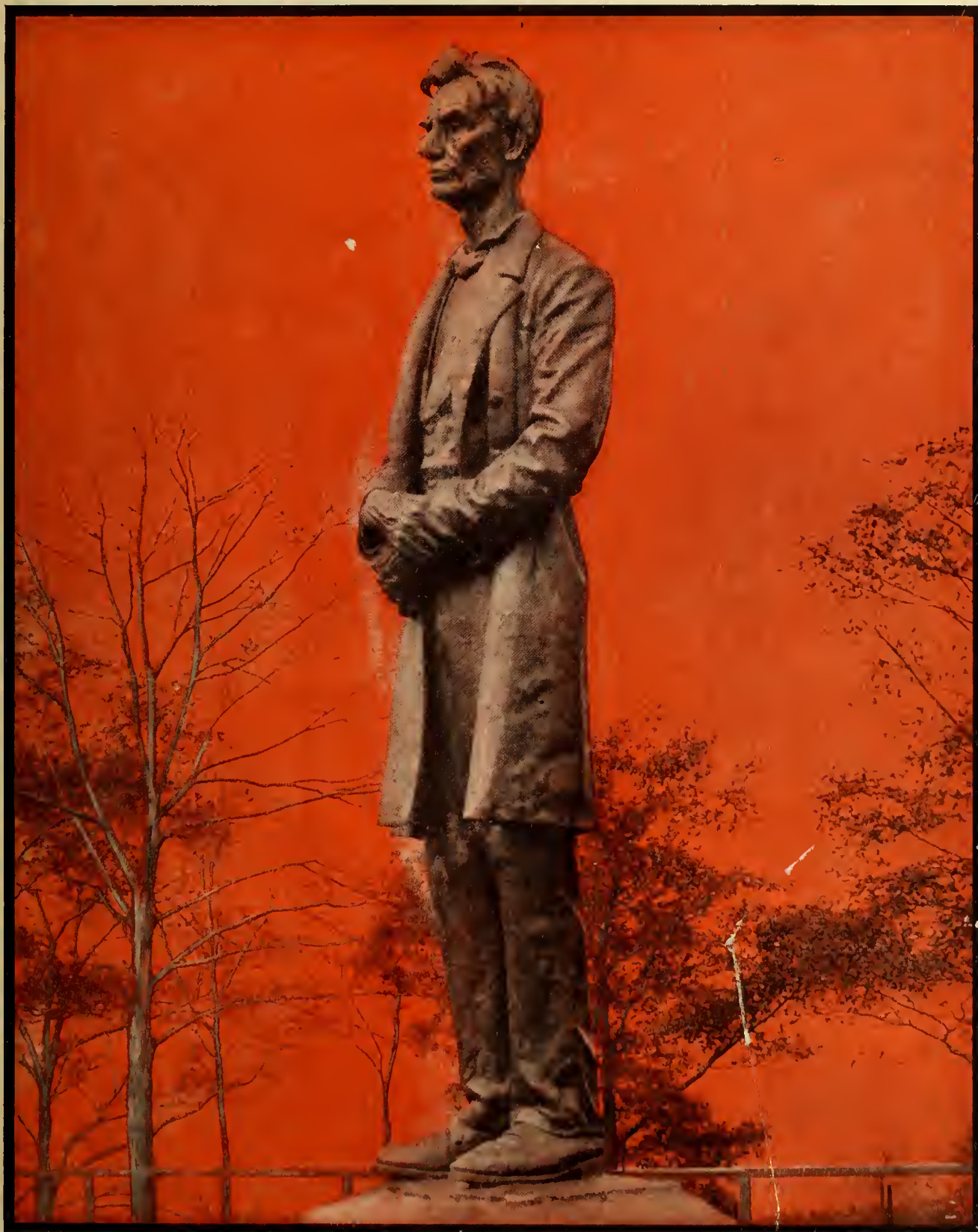


The Independent

FEBRUARY 26, 1917

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
HARPER'S WEEKLY

PRICE TEN CENTS



Perry Studio

"Thru all the carnage and suffering and conflicting motives of the Civil War Lincoln held steadfastly to the belief that it was the freedom of the people to govern themselves which was the fundamental issue at stake. So do we today."—*David Lloyd George, Prime Minister of Great Britain*

A SCULPTOR OF DEMOCRACY

BY MILTON BRONNER

THE workshop of George Grey Barnard is perched way up on what in Revolutionary days was Fort Washington, a steep rocky hill taken by the British and then recaptured by Washington's men. Even now it is hard to realize there that one is in the metropolis. There are real country estates on one side of the brow of the hill, and on the other a steep, tree-grown declivity. The nearest towering apartment houses are across the valley, a good five blocks away.

Barnard's studio looks as if once it had been a church. The day I was there it seemed like a temple or a shrine dedicated to Lincoln. Coming in, I was confronted by the heroic-sized plaster model from which was cast the Lincoln statue, shortly to be erected in Cincinnati. In another part of the room was a huge head of Lincoln, twelve feet high. Scattered all about were studies of Lincoln's face and part masks, which were studies for his mouth and nose.

I had come to Barnard as a reporter for the *Cincinnati Post*, and I asked all sorts of questions, which the famous artist answered with great patience and kindness. I was curious about this Lincoln, because Barnard's fame had been made in a far different line of work. Hitherto he had treated allegorical and classical subjects. I remember asking him whether he had not filled himself with Lincoln literature before starting on his great work, which I believe is the finest of all the statues of the martyr President.

"Of course I know and love the story of Lincoln's wonderful life," said he, "but here is what I get my Lincoln from." He showed me a mask of Lincoln's face. "His death mask?" I queried.

"No," said he. "It is his life mask, taken shortly before he went to Washington to assume the duties of the Presidency. You made the same mistake all do to whom I show this mask. You will note the utter lack of self-consciousness in this mask. In most men you get this only when they are dead. In Lincoln it was there when he was alive.

"I simply took this mask and studied it for 100 days. I wanted to read its riddle. I wanted to find the flow of its features. This face is the exterior of the temple which housed his great spirit. The face and the body—in the statue—must, if possible, reveal the soul of the man who was Abe Lincoln. Note the lines in this mask, the markings graven by care and toil and suffering and deep thought. Look at the mouth—not without its attributes of

The George Grey Barnard statue of Abraham Lincoln, which is reproduced on the cover of The Independent, is a gift to the city of Cincinnati from Mr. and Mrs. Charles P. Taft. At present it is on exhibition in New York City, but it is soon to be dedicated in Cincinnati, probably by ex-President William H. Taft.—THE EDITOR.

beauty—but firm and patient and strong and humorous. And see this side of the mouth, the mother side I call it. It is all tenderness and pity and compassion.

"When I had finished studying this and dreaming over it, I made that huge Lincoln head twelve feet high. It is not a copy of the mask. It is my conception of what I got out of it. See the lines in the face, as some one very beautifully said: 'furrowed as by rivers of tears.' You will observe I did not have the eyes open in this huge head. I wanted to fix in my own mind the other features first. The eyes—they most fully reveal the soul. They came later.

"When I had finished with the face there came the all-important subject of the hands. Lincoln's were big hands. They were the hands of a man who had toiled long and hard with them. They were gnarled. The veins stood out high. So I made them that way and I folded them patiently across each other.

"And Lincoln's feet were big. He stood firmly planted on earth. So I made his feet that way. I was trying to get at the real Lincoln. I was not trying to make a statue of a mere President. We will go on having Presidents for a thousand years, but I doubt whether we will have another Lincoln. I have tried to show Lincoln,

the great noble leader arisen from the plain people.

"This wonderful statue makes you the sculptor of democracy," I observed.

"Lincoln is our song of democracy. I am but the poor singer of the divine song," he replied.

He told me how he sought for over a year to get a model to pose for the figure of Lincoln. Finally and fittingly he found a Kentuckian, named Thomas, who was born and who lived only fifteen miles from Hodgenville, Kentucky, where Lincoln was born. Thomas brought with him his father's old broadcloth suit and boots, the kind men used to wear in 1858 when they went to gala affairs. Thomas had worn the trousers to work in. So they were baggy and, as Barnard expressed it: "Full of his form." They expressed the man who had toiled in them.

"I made him put on that old-fashioned coat and vest. The clothes fell on him as if they belonged. The shirt was the kind Lincoln wore—soft, with a rolling collar, one flap of which was always turning up above his coat. He wore the same kind of little bow tie Lincoln affected. And he stood with big generous feet planted on the soil just as Lincoln did. Also, he was about the right height, six feet, four inches."

This Lincoln of the statue is the smooth shaven Lincoln in whose face all the hills and hollows are plainly to be seen. The wart is visible. So is the protruding Adam's apple. His deep-set eyes are those of both doer and dreamer. The hands, so peacefully folded, appear as if he had just finished one task and was waiting for another. There is nothing conventional anywhere in the figure. The back of the coat shows a bulge. The coat sleeves show wrinkles. The trousers are plainly bagged. The shoes are plainly coarse. As Barnard put it: "Even as there is a sense of gnarl in his face, so I have put it in his hands and his clothes."

Not long ago an old man was privileged to be one of the first to see the model of the statue. He was born in Springfield, Illinois. When he was a lad Lincoln lifted him higher than any one else could. The old man stood gazing at the figure and then whispered: "That's him. That's the nearest to his living self I've ever seen."

Somewhat you cannot avoid that impression. As I turned with Barnard to leave the studio, I took a last look at the model. And it would not at all have surprised me to have seen the lips move and to have heard a voice say: "Here I am, Lord. What work have you for me to do?"

New York City



Press Illustrating

GEORGE GREY BARNARD